



County of San Diego

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

JOHN L. SNYDER
DIRECTOR

5555 OVERLAND AVE, SUITE 2188
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92123-1295

(858) 694-2212 FAX: (858) 268-0461
Web Site: sdcdpw.org

February 20, 2007

CEQA Initial Study - Environmental Checklist Form (Based on the State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G Rev. 10/98)

1. Project Name/Number:

San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center Project, COFD-00237

2. Lead agency name and address:

County of San Diego, Department of Public Works
5469 Kearny Villa Road, Suite 305
San Diego, CA 92123-1152

3. a. Contact: Gail Jurgella, Environmental Planner
b. Phone number: (858) 874-4049
c. E-mail: gail.jurgella@sdcounty.ca.gov

4. Project location:

San Elijo Lagoon County Park and Ecological Reserve (San Elijo Lagoon) is located in northern San Diego County in the City of Encinitas. The proposed project is located at the San Elijo Lagoon visitor center, which is located on the northern edge of the San Elijo Lagoon, west of Interstate 5 (I-5) and south of Manchester Avenue, at 2710 Manchester Avenue. The project site is located in the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Encinitas Quadrangle, Section 27, Township 13 South, Range 4 West (Figures 1 and 2).

Thomas Brothers Coordinates: Page 1167, Grid E4

5. Project sponsor's name and address:

County of San Diego
Department of Parks and Recreation
5201 Ruffin Road, Suite P
San Diego, CA 92123

6. General Plan Designation

Community Plan:

Land Use Designation:

City of Encinitas General Plan

Open Space, Parks, and Preserves

Density: N/A

7. Zoning

Use Regulation: Ecological Reserve\Open Space\Parks

Density: N/A

Special Area Regulation: Coastal Zone

8. Description of project (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation):

The San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center Project is located in northern San Diego County in the City of Encinitas at the San Elijo Lagoon. The existing San Elijo Lagoon visitor center is located approximately 580 meters (1,902 feet) west of I-5 at 2710 Manchester Avenue, on the northern shore of the lagoon. The project site is located on the USGS Encinitas Quadrangle, Section 27 Township 13 South, Range 4 West.

The San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) currently operates a small visitor center located within the San Elijo Lagoon County Park and Ecological Reserve that was constructed in 1988. The park and visitor center currently contain walking paths, interpretive displays, and viewpoints for passive public access to the San Elijo Lagoon. County Parks manages the lagoon with guidance from the California Fish and Game Department (CDFG). The existing one-story visitor center is approximately 2,800 square feet and contains interpretive displays, a ranger office, a covered assembly and educational area with exhibits and seating, and public restrooms. Another 2,100 square foot area within the developed footprint of the visitor center includes a trailer that houses park volunteers, walkways and fenced outdoor storage. A parking lot with 24 parking spaces is also on-site. A pump station maintained by the San Elijo Water Reclamation Facility is located in the northern part of the parking lot near the entrance. A 0.106-acre planted coastal sage scrub area is located between the visitor center and the parking lot.

The San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center Project involves the replacement of the existing visitor center with a new more efficient and modern building (Figures 3 and 4). The project proposes to demolish and remove the existing one-story visitor center, trailer, and storage shed (approximately 4,900 square foot area), and replace it with a new, two-story nature center (approximately 7,500 square feet over two floors, including 4,300 square foot building and 3,200 square feet of assembly area, walkways and observation deck). The new building will be constructed on a footprint similar to that of the existing visitor center. The floor plan for the new nature center includes a large display/exhibit area, a ranger office, restrooms, a multi-purpose room for meetings and class activities, a wet lab and storage. Outdoor improvements include a large covered assembly area, an observation deck, parking lot upgrades, and park entry improvements. A trail is proposed behind the nature center to provide access to an elevator to the second story. The trail will be approximately 30 feet long and 6 feet wide, and will be designed to be handicap accessible.

The Nature Center will continue to serve as an educational center for the public and a destination for area school fieldtrips. Exhibits will educate the public about the lagoon watershed, local wildlife communities and the unique history of the area. The structures will be designed to be compatible with the adjacent lagoon environment, provide access to the disabled, and obtain a minimum certification of "gold" under the US Green Building Council LEED program. LEED-certified design features of the nature center will include, among other sustainable features, a green roof planted with native plants, a metal roof with solar panels,

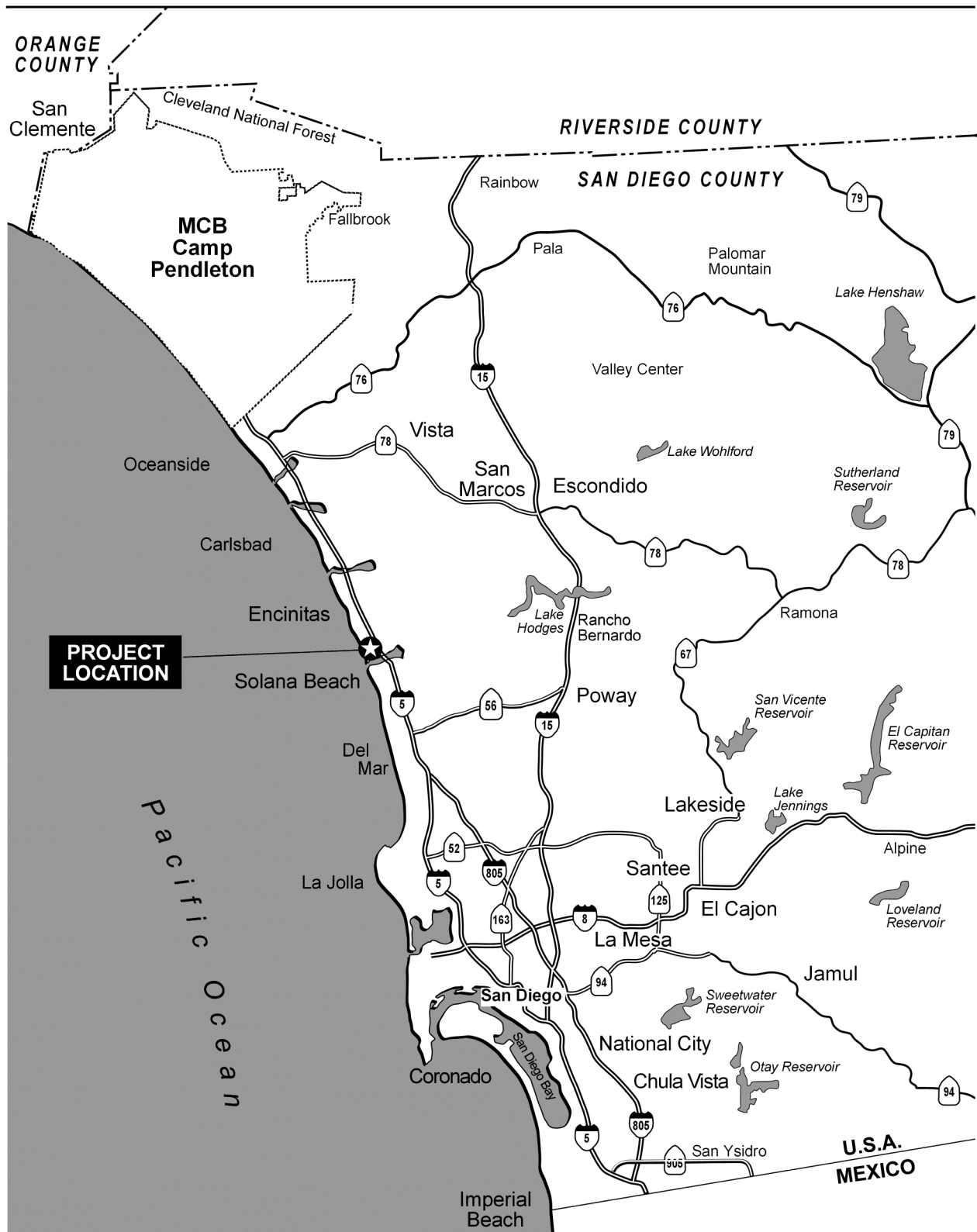
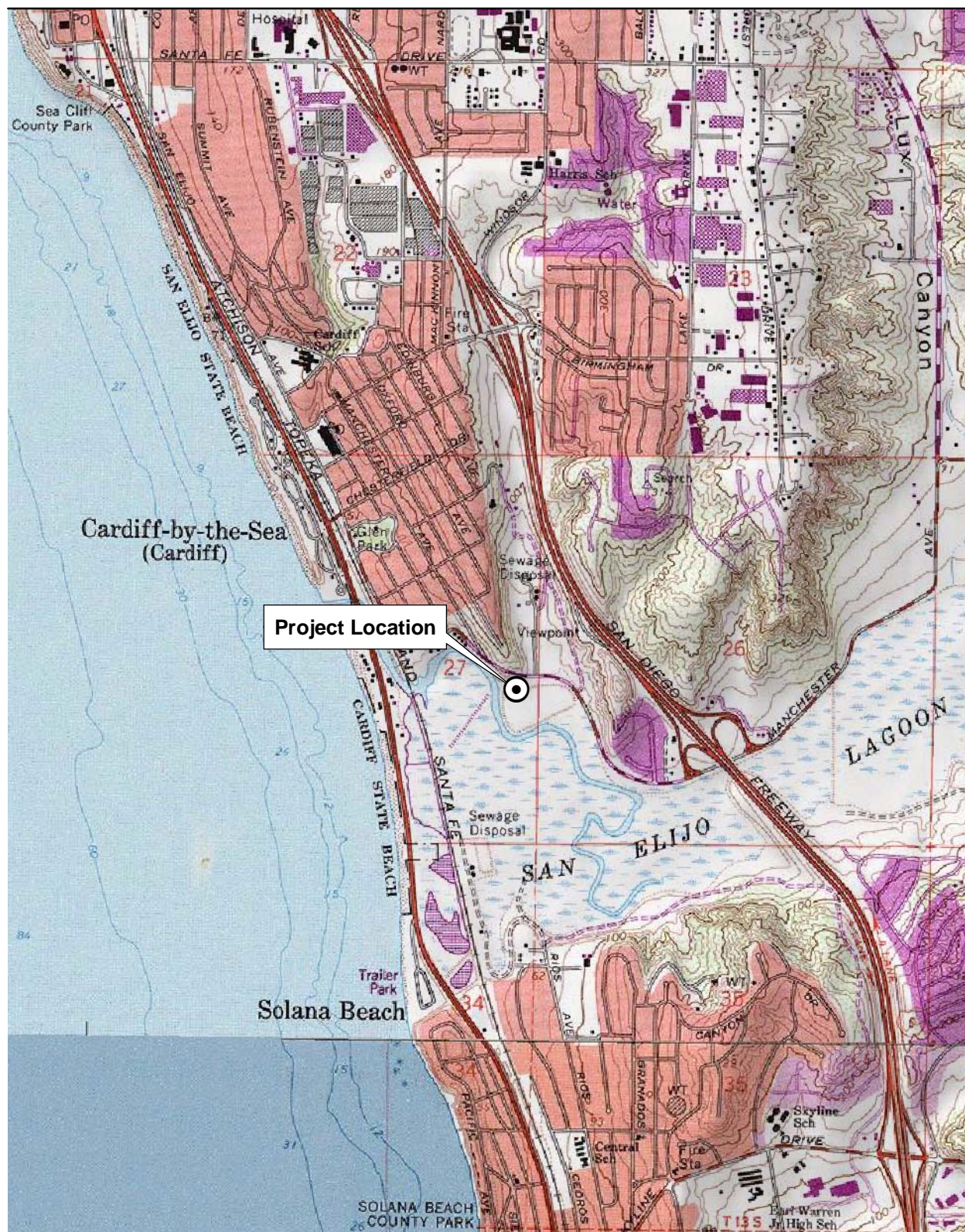


Figure 1
Regional Location Map



Source: USGS 7.5' Quadrangle, Del Mar, California 1975, Encinitas, California 1975

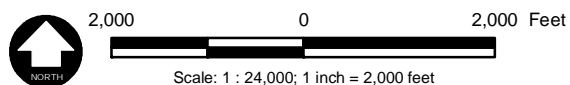
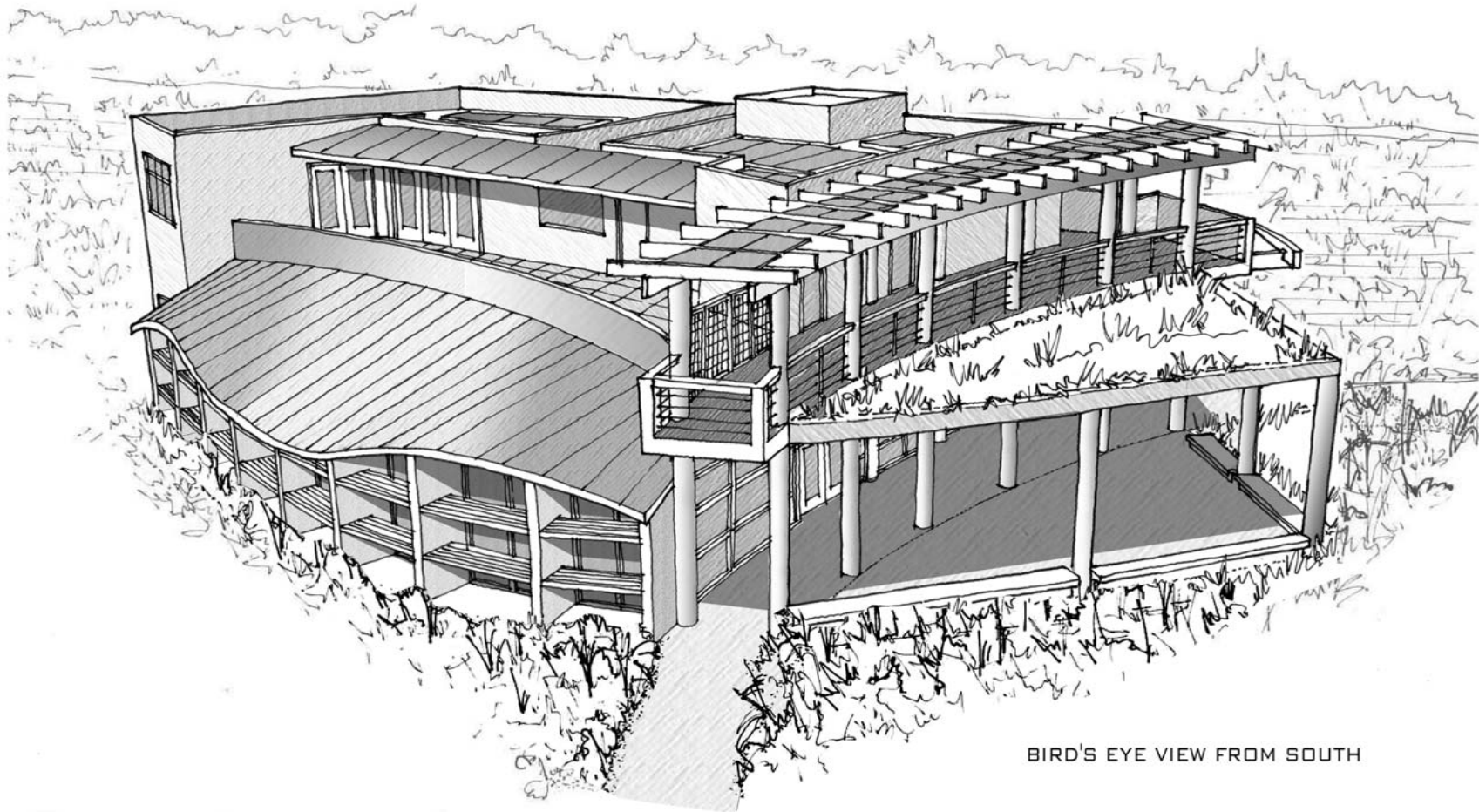


Figure 2
Location Map

San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center Project

Path: P:\2006\06080055 DPW Adjunct Staff - Mitigation\SGIS\MXD\Fig 2 Location Map.mxd, 06/08/06, morenop

SAN ELIJO LAGOON NATURE CENTER



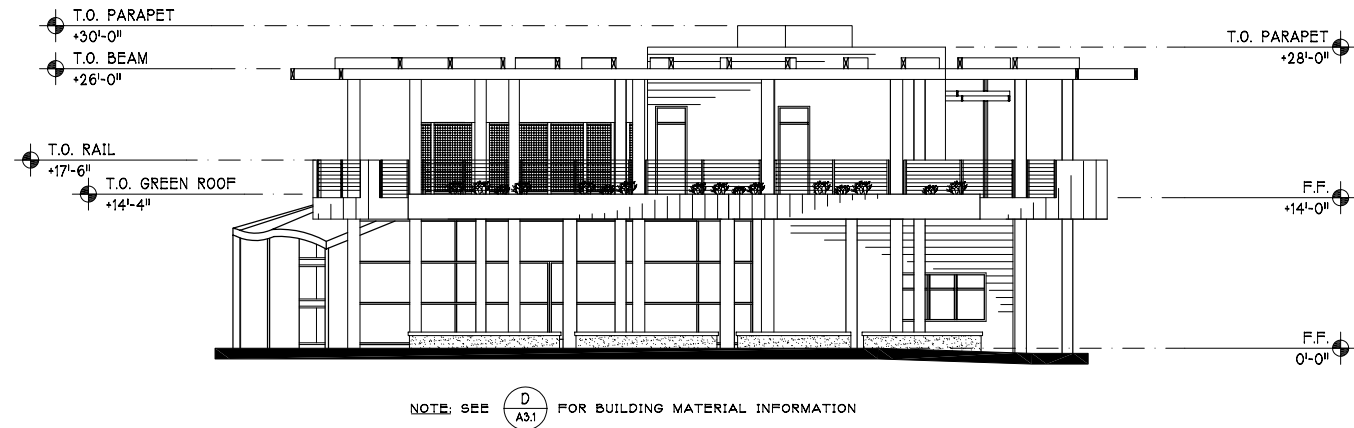
BIRD'S EYE VIEW FROM SOUTH

ZAGRODNIK + THOMAS
ARCHITECTS, LLP

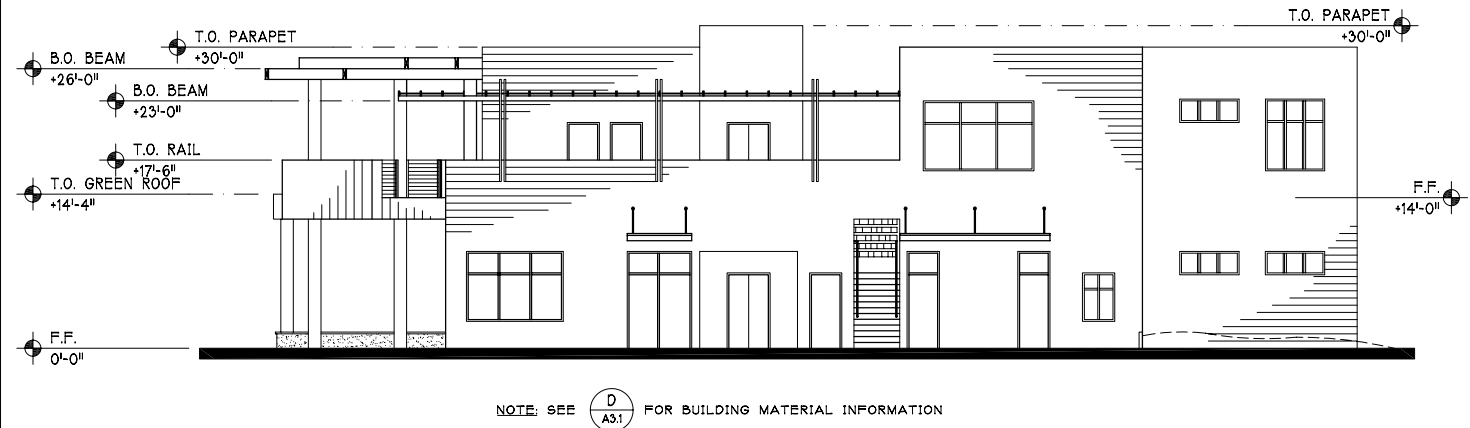
17 JULY 2006

Figure 3

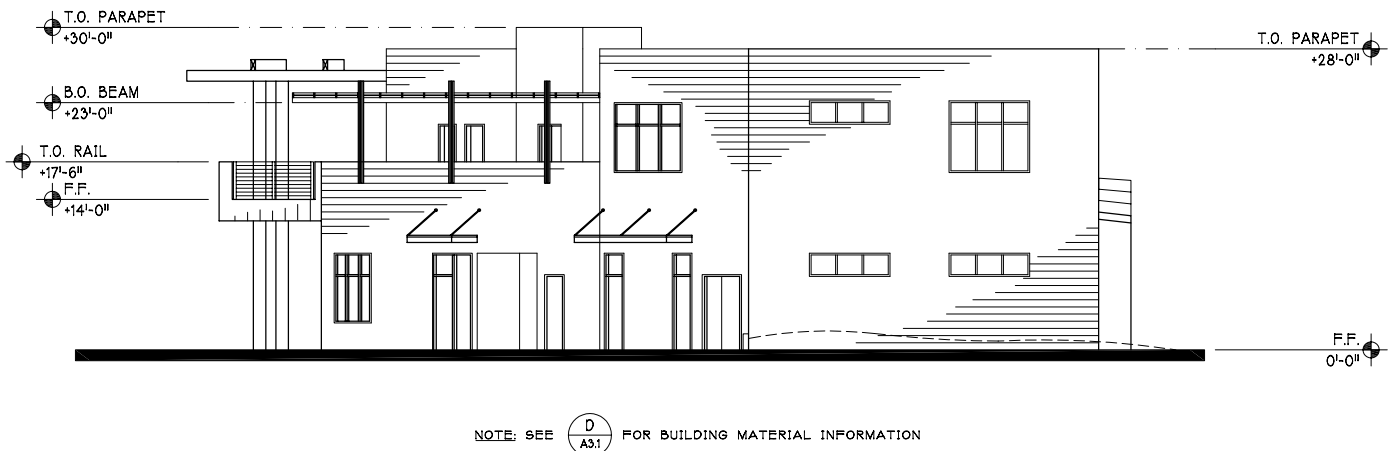
B SOUTHEAST ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



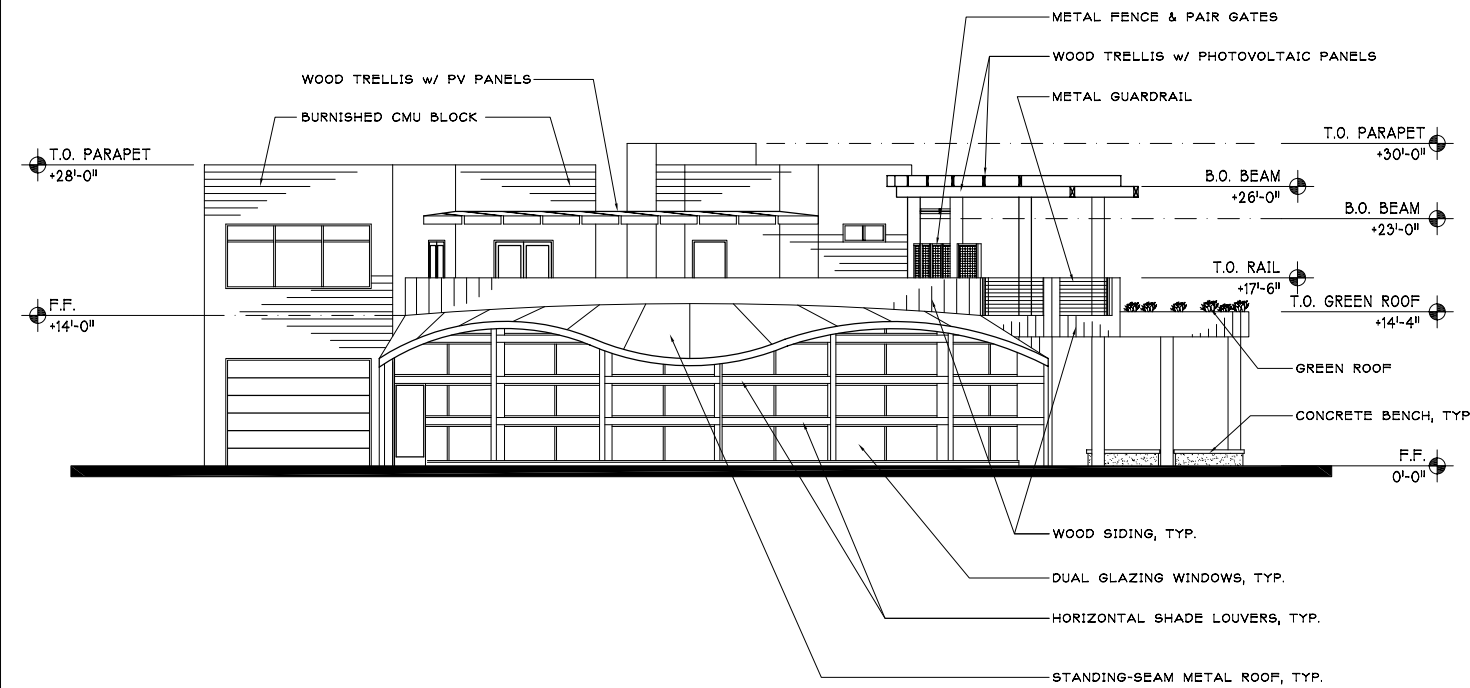
A NORTHEAST ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



D NORTHWEST ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



C SOUTHWEST ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



ZAGRODNIK + THOMAS
ARCHITECTS, LLP
3956 30TH STREET
SAN DIEGO, CA 92104
619 . 528 . 1199

SAN ELIJO NATURE CENTER
COASTAL COMMISSION SUBMITTAL REVIEW
2710 MANCHESTER AVE.
ENCINITAS, CA 92007 - 2204



ISSUES
1. THIS SET IS NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

BUILDING
ELEVATIONS
A3.1

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ALL PLANS, DESIGNS AND IDEAS SHOWN ON THIS DRAWING ARE THE PROPERTY OF ZAGRODNIK + THOMAS ARCHITECTS AND SHALL NOT BE USED, DISCLOSED OR REPRODUCED BY ANY PERSON, FIRM OR CORPORATION FOR ANY PURPOSE WHATSOEVER WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION OF ZAGRODNIK + THOMAS ARCHITECTS

wood trellis and siding, dual glazed windows, split-face or burnished block, and a steel and wood stairway.

The identified project impact area (PIA) for the nature center totals approximately 0.77 acres, including the existing parking lot. Of this, the project will result in approximately 0.060 hectare (0.149 acre) of temporary and 0.003 hectare (0.008 acre) of permanent impacts to occupied Diegan coastal sage scrub habitat. Temporary impacts will result from vegetation clearing and disturbance during the demolition and construction phases of the project. Temporary impacts will occur along the north and western sides of the visitor center.

Vegetation clearing, demolition, and construction activities will commence outside of the coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (February 15 through August 30) to avoid impacts to the species. If construction must continue during this time, sound barriers at sensitive habitat locations will be implemented during construction as noted herein or coordinated with the USFWS and CDFG and are reasonable and prudent. This plan would include measures such as noise barriers to reduce construction noise levels below the accepted levels and monitoring of adjacent nesting birds. Construction will occur during daylight hours (no temporary lighting is proposed) and is anticipated to take approximately 12 months to complete. As such, construction activities would impact just one coastal California gnatcatcher season. However, as discussed below, the project has been scheduled and designed to incorporate features to minimize and avoid potential impacts to this species.

A qualified archaeologist and Native American consultant/Kumeyaay -appointed consultant will monitor ground disturbing grading activity and development activity during construction of the nature center. In addition, the trail will be constructed outside of the cultural resources sensitive area; however, because of its proximity to the cultural resources sensitive area, special measures are recommended to avoid impacts to the site.

During demolition of the existing structures and construction of the nature center, standard Best Management Practices (BMPs) as outlined in the Water Quality Report will be implemented at the project site to reduce or minimize impacts to the surrounding lagoon from erosion. Construction staging areas will occur within previously disturbed areas, mainly on the existing paved parking lot.

9. Surrounding land uses and setting (Briefly describe the project's surroundings):

The San Elijo Lagoon visitor center is located on a 9.01-acre County-owned parcel that contains walking paths, interpretive displays, and viewpoints with public access to the San Elijo Lagoon. Lands immediately south of the visitor center are naturally vegetated open space with well maintained public trails. Open waters of the San Elijo Lagoon are approximately 120 feet west of the project site. Land uses surrounding the visitor center include the lagoon to the south and southwest, Cardiff Pump Station in the southeast part of the parking lot, custom single-family residential homes on a bluff along the north side of Manchester Avenue, and the San Elijo Water Treatment Plant to the northeast across Manchester Avenue. I-5 is located approximately 1,550 feet east of the site.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

Permit Type/Action

Habitat Loss Permit

Habitat Loss Permit concurrence

Agency

County of San Diego-DPLU

California Department of Fish & Game

Habitat Loss Permit concurrence
Coastal development permit

US Fish & Wildlife Service
California Coastal Commission

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology & Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Haz. Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology & Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use & Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population & Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities & Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Public Works finds that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Public Works finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ On the basis of this Initial Study, the Department of Public Works finds that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Signature

Gail Jurgella
Printed Name

Date

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER
Title

I. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: Scenic vistas are singular vantage points that offer unobstructed views of valued viewsheds, including areas designated as official scenic vistas along major highways or County designated visual resources. Based on an Aesthetic/Visual Opportunity and Constraints Analysis of the site (P & D, 2006), the proposed project is located within a high quality scenic vista. As defined in the Encinitas General Plan, the site is located within a "Scenic/Visual Corridor Overlay Zone", where all new development should consider significant aesthetic and visual resources to retain the existing high quality viewshed. The viewshed and visible components of the landscape that establish the visual environment include the San Elijo Lagoon, Pacific Ocean, underlying landforms such as coastal bluffs, and overlaying landcover including the natural vegetation.

The existing views of the visitor center are of a covered gathering area with a white roof approximately 15 to 17 feet in height supported by white metal posts. The gathering area contains long benches and educational displays. The visitor center building is located at the back of the gathering area and consists of a small enclosed office of wood construction and simple architectural design. The visitor center is painted a non-obtrusive light blue color and is well maintained. The building contains no particular architectural ornamentation. The visual composition surrounding site consists mainly of the San Elijo Lagoon, which is located in a wide flat plain with a shallow-water estuary, meandering open waterway, and low-lying grasses, bushes, and weeds. Custom homes are located at varying elevations north of the site and Manchester Avenue. Steep undeveloped slopes over 50 feet in height rise from the lagoon floor on the south side of the lagoon. Manchester Avenue is visible to the north side of the site. The existing structure is situated below Manchester Avenue and separated from the road by a vegetated earthen berm.

The visual environment of the site and scenic vista includes both public and private views. Public views include those from Manchester Avenue adjacent to the existing visitor center; from Highway 101 west of the site; from a public trail located atop the earthen berm along the south side of Manchester Avenue; and from other public trails within the park. Private views include those from single-family homes to the north of the site that overlook the lagoon and Pacific Ocean and residences in Solana Beach located at the top of slopes along the southern rim of the lagoon.

The proposed project will replace the existing, outdated visitor center with a modern, LEED-certified two-story building. No new buildings would be introduced into the viewshed, as the layout would generally remain within the existing building footprint. Though the new structure will exceed the height of the existing building by one story, views of the site from I-5 and Manchester Avenue are obstructed by the above-grade level of both roads. Since unobstructed views of the lagoon and ocean are not available from Manchester Avenue near the visitor center, a two-story building will not obstruct significant public views. The proposed nature center will not block or detract from any existing high quality views from Highway 101. Views from the trail on the south rim of the lagoon will not be adversely impacted, as the new building would not detract from the surrounding high quality visual

environment. The two-story building will have the potential to partially block views of the lagoon and ocean from a public walkway located atop the berm along the south side of Manchester Avenue. However, this dirt walkway is of poor condition in comparison to the surrounding network of trails and generally discourages public use. From surrounding public walkway viewpoints, the visual focus is on the lagoon and ocean, and the project will not obstruct or obscure wide-angle views of these features. Views of the lagoon and ocean from the nature center will remain in tact and would be enhanced by an observation deck on the second floor, which would allow for panoramic views of the lagoon. As such, the proposed nature center will not have a substantial adverse effect on the surrounding scenic vista.

During demolition of the existing buildings and construction of the new nature center, construction equipment, demolition debris, and fugitive dust may affect the scenic vista of the area. All construction equipment and activity will occur within the footprint of the existing visitor center and parking lot. Because views of the site are obstructed from the nearest road, Manchester Avenue, the majority of construction activity and equipment will not be visible from the road. Distant views of construction activity may be visible from residences to the north of the site and south of the lagoon, as well as from Highway 101 west of the site. Given the size and nature of the surrounding vista, and that construction activity is temporary, construction of the proposed project will not result in a substantial adverse effect to the surrounding scenic vista.

The project will not result in cumulative impacts on the scenic vista. The entire existing viewshed and a description of past, present and future projects within that viewshed were evaluated. The I-5 Manchester and widening project listed in Section XVII Mandatory Findings of Significance is located within the scenic vista's viewshed and will not contribute to a cumulative impact. This determination is based on the proposed nature center project which is designed to retain the visual quality of the lagoon without adding to cumulative impacts. Improvements to the I-5 Manchester Interchange will not be significant from the lagoon and would not result in incompatible changes in visual character or degrade the overall visual quality of the area. Therefore, the project will not result in any adverse project or cumulative level effects on a scenic vista.

- b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not located near State Scenic Highway, though the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has identified I-5 as an Eligible State Scenic Highway. The proposed project is the replacement of an existing building of similar scale and will not result in an adverse impact to the area's natural beauty, dominate views from the highway, or alter the natural landscape; all of which are considered visual intrusions by Caltrans. As such, the proposed project will not reduce the eligibility of the length of I-5 near the site to become designated as a scenic resource within a State scenic highway in the future.

The proposed project will generally remain within the footprint of the existing visitor center and will not result in damage to scenic resources such as trees, rock outcroppings, wetland or estuary habitat, or natural topography. Approximately 0.008 acre of planted coastal sage will be removed to accommodate the building area; however, given the size and nature of the surrounding lagoon, this change will not result in substantial damage to scenic resources. No substantial grading will be required that would potentially reduce the generally unified views of the area. Therefore, the proposed project will not result in substantial damage to scenic resources within a state highway.

- c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The proposed project will replace the existing visitor center with a new modern building that will have a similar visual character to the existing building. Though the proposed nature center will be two stories, thereby exceeding the height of the existing building, it will retain a similar character and appearance to what is presently on the site. The new structure would be built on the existing developed footprint and will include the new nature center, ranger office, public restrooms, wet lab, exhibit area, and conference room.

Guests of the visitor center and lagoon are considered sensitive viewers and are expected to have prolonged viewing times of the surrounding environment, and who are typically at the location for a positive viewing experience. The new nature center will not be a dominant feature of the landscape, as viewers are more likely drawn to the western and southerly views of the lagoon and Pacific Ocean. The new visitor center will include interpretive displays which could enhance the viewer experience by providing informational signage, area history, and significance of the surrounding visual environment. As such, the project is compatible with the existing visual environment in terms of visual character and quality.

Potential aesthetic issues associated with the proposed project would be related to architectural design of the nature center. Exterior materials to be used on the new structure include a green roof planted with native plants, metal roofing with solar panels, wood trellis and siding, dual glazed windows, burnished or split-face block, and a steel and wood stairway. An observation deck on the second floor of the building will provide for panoramic views of the lagoon and ocean. Although not required, the nature center is designed to be compatible with the visual goals and policies outlined in the Encinitas General Plan for land within the Scenic/Visual Overlay, and would comply with all criteria for design including: a building height, bulk, roof line, and color that would not obstruct, limit or degrade the existing views; and landscaping that would be located to screen adjacent undesirable views. Therefore, the project will be designed to be compatible with the surrounding visual environment and would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site.

The surrounding high quality visual environment of the San Elijo Lagoon, estuary and wetland habitat, and varying topography would remain unaltered by implementation of the project. Views of the surrounding environment consist largely of continuous views of the

lagoon, with some diversity such as homes with unique architectural styles to the north and south, steep slopes around the lagoon, and public trails. The nature center will be replacing an existing structure and will be designed to blend in with the adjacent estuary and ocean views. The project will not degrade the character or quality of the site including vegetation, landform features, water features, or the built environment. As such, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the surrounding area.

The project will not result in cumulative impacts on visual character or quality because the entire existing viewshed and a description of past, present and future projects within that viewshed were evaluated. Those projects listed in Section XVII Mandatory Findings of Significance (I-5 Manchester and widening project) located within the viewshed surrounding the nature center project and will not contribute to a cumulative impact because the nature center project will not result in significant alternation of the landscape or proposed new development. Cumulative projects (I-5 Manchester and widening project) as listed in Section XVII will also not result in development in or around the lagoon that would result in significant alteration of the existing high quality views. Therefore, the project will not result in any adverse project or cumulative level effect on visual character or quality on-site or in the surrounding area.

- d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project does not include the use of outdoor lighting or building materials with highly reflective properties such as highly reflective glass or high-gloss surface colors. Therefore, the project will not create any new sources of light pollution that could contribute to skyglow, light trespass or glare and will not adversely affect day or nighttime views in area.

II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES -- In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:

- a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site does not contain any lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. The nearest agricultural area, designated as Prime Farmland, is located approximately 0.7 mile from the project site, east of I-5 and is completely separated from the project site. Therefore, no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide will be converted to a non-agricultural use as a result of the proposed project.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site is zoned as ecological reserve\open space\park, which is not considered to be an agricultural zone. Additionally, land within the project site is not under a Williamson Act Contract. Therefore, the project does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.

c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site and surrounding area within radius of 1 mile do not contain any lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. An exception is an agricultural area designated as Prime Farmland, which is located east of I-5 approximately 0.7 mile from the visitor center, and is completely separated from the proposed project. Therefore, no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide will be converted to a non-agricultural use.

III. AIR QUALITY -- Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) or applicable portions of the State Implementation Plan (SIP)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: Operation of the project will not result in emissions of significant quantities of criteria pollutants listed in the California Ambient Air Quality Standards or toxic air contaminants as identified by the California Air Resources Board. Therefore, the project will not conflict or obstruct with the implementation of the RAQS nor the SIP on a project or cumulative level.

- b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project proposes demolition of existing buildings, grading, and construction of a new Nature Center consisting of one main building and an outdoor exhibit area. Demolition and construction are anticipated to last for approximately one year. However, grading operations associated with the construction of the project would be subject to County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, which requires the implementation of dust control measures. Emissions from the construction phase would be minimal and localized, resulting in pollutant emissions below the screening-level criteria established by SDAPCD Rule 20.2 and by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) CEQA Air Quality Handbook section 6.2 and 6.3. In addition, no additional vehicle trips generated from the project are anticipated, as no significant additional parking will be added. According to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District CEQA Guidelines for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plans, projects that generate less than 2,000 Average Daily Trips (ADTs) are below the Screening-Level Criteria established by SDAPCD Rule 20.2 and by the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook section 6.2 and 6.3 for criteria pollutants. As such, the project will not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

- c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

San Diego County is presently in non-attainment for the 1-hour concentrations under the California Ambient Air Quality Standard (CAAQS) for Ozone (O₃). San Diego County is also presently in non-attainment for the annual geometric mean and for the 24-hour concentrations of Particulate Matter less than or equal to 10 microns (PM₁₀) under the CAAQS. O₃ is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) react in the presence of sunlight. VOC sources include any source that burns fuels (e.g., gasoline, natural gas, wood, oil); solvents; petroleum processing and storage; and pesticides. Sources of PM₁₀ in both urban and rural areas include: motor vehicles, wood

burning stoves and fireplaces, dust from construction, landfills, agriculture, wildfires, brush/waste burning, and industrial sources of windblown dust from open lands.

Less than Significant Impact: Air quality emissions associated with the project include emissions of PM₁₀, NO_x and VOCs from demolition, construction, and grading activities, and VOCs as the result of a potential increase of traffic from operations at the facility. However, grading operations associated with the construction of the project would be subject to County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, which requires the implementation of dust control measures. Emissions from the construction phase would be minimal and localized, resulting in PM₁₀ and VOC emissions below the screening-level criteria established by SDAPCD Rule 20.2 and by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) CEQA air quality handbook section 6.2 and 6.3. The vehicle trips generated from the project will result in an estimated 400 Average Daily Trips (ADTs). According to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District CEQA Guidelines for Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plans, projects that generate less than 2,000 ADT are below the Screening-Level Criteria established by SDAPCD Rule 20.2 and by the SCAQMD CEQA air quality handbook section 6.2 and 6.3 for VOCs and PM₁₀.

In addition, a list of past, present and future projects within the surrounding area were evaluated and none of these projects emit significant amounts of criteria pollutants. Refer to XVII. Mandatory Findings of Significance for a comprehensive list of the projects considered. The proposed project as well as the past, present and future projects within the surrounding area, have emissions below the screening-level criteria established by SDAPCD Rule 20.2 and by the SCAQMD CEQA air quality handbook section 6.2 and 6.3, therefore, the construction and operational emissions associated with the proposed project are not expected to create a cumulatively considerable impact nor a considerable net increase of PM₁₀, or any O₃ precursors.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: Air quality regulators typically define sensitive receptors as schools (Preschool-12th Grade), hospitals, resident care facilities, or day-care centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions that would be adversely impacted by changes in air quality. While no traditional sensitive receptors are located near the project site, the San Elijo Lagoon does support recreational gathering and activities, which includes school field trips and other informal gatherings of children. However, based on review by DPW staff, this project does not propose uses or activities that would result in exposure of the identified sensitive receptor to significant pollutant concentrations. In addition, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations because the proposed project has emissions below the screening-level criteria established by SDAPCD Rule 20.2 and by the SCAQMD CEQA air quality handbook section 6.2 and 6.3.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
|---|---|

- ☐ Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: No potential sources of objectionable odors have been identified in association with the proposed project. As such, no impact from odors is anticipated.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

- ☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☒ Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated ☐ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated: A Biological Technical Report (BTR) was prepared for the proposed project by a qualified biologist, which incorporated a literature search, several field surveys, vegetation community mapping, general plant and wildlife surveys, and habitat assessment surveys (AMEC, 2005). The project area has been found to contain Diegan coastal sage scrub, which is known to support the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila californica californica*). The proposed project will temporarily impact 0.149 acre and permanently impact 0.008 acre of suitable occupied coastal sage scrub habitat for this species. The 0.008 acre of permanent impact is located on the northeast and west sides of the existing visitor's center. This habitat will be impacted by the construction of an ADA-compliant pathway and elevator (NE side) and a portion of the new building (W side). The 0.149 acre of temporary impacts will occur around the sides of the existing visitor's center. Temporary impacts will occur from clearing of the construction work area and general disturbance during demolition and construction.

In 2005, protocol surveys for the presence or absence of endangered, threatened, or rare plant or animal species or their habitats were conducted within the project site for the following species: coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), and southwestern willow fly catcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*). In addition, focused field surveys were conducted for the light-footed clapper rail (*Rallus longirostris levipes*). A family of coastal California gnatcatchers was observed in the planted coastal sage habitat approximately 20 feet southwest of the visitor center. Gnatcatchers were observed at this location during all five surveys. It was concluded that the site did not contain habitat to support the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher, however both species could use the area during migration. There is a low to moderate potential for the light-footed clapper rail to occur on-site; however, a light-footed clapper rail pair was detected during the biological surveys (Konecny Biological Services, 2005) roughly 750 feet from the project site.

DPW and Parks and Recreation acknowledge that the proposed project could result in impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher and has identified conservation measures outlined in the MND that are to be implemented in order to avoid impacts to the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher (both project and cumulative). To avoid potential impacts to

the gnatcatcher, all vegetation clearing shall occur outside the breeding season (defined as February 15 – August 31). Implementation of proposed conservation measures will avoid impacts to the gnatcatcher to the greatest extent possible while still meeting the purpose and need for the visitor center replacement project. These measures include construction of an exclusionary fence around the project site prior to construction, monitoring of the area by a qualified biologist, scheduling of noise-intensive work outside of the gnatcatcher breeding season as reasonable and prudent, sound barriers at sensitive habitat locations if construction continues into the gnatcatcher breeding season, and restoration of the habitat after construction by re-planting temporarily impacted habitat to pre-construction conditions. These measures will be implemented before and after construction as coordinated with the USFWS and CDFG through the Habitat Loss Permit process.

It is the County's opinion that with the incorporation of the proposed avoidance, minimization, mitigation and conservation measures, the potential impacts identified in the MND will be mitigated to a level below significance. In addition, the proposed project will not substantially degrade the quality of the environment, nor will it substantially reduce the habitat for the Coastal California gnatcatcher. The potential effect to the coastal California gnatcatcher population located within the PIA would not cause the population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threatening the existence of the bird. The project will result in permanent impacts to 0.008 acre of occupied gnatcatcher habitat. Permanent impacts to coastal sage scrub will be mitigated at a ratio of 2:1 and will result in revegetation of 0.011 acre of coastal sage scrub habitat on-site and 0.005 acres at the off-site Solana Hills Mitigation Site.

- b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated: The project has the potential to result in direct (0.008 acre) and indirect impacts (0.149 acre) to Diegan coastal sage scrub, which has been identified as a sensitive natural community by the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act and Section 4d of the Endangered Species Act. The County has determined that the coastal sage scrub near the visitor center provides moderate gnatcatcher habitat, as the area is dissected with trails and adjacent to the visitor center and parking lot. Additionally, the 0.008 acre of permanent impacts is an isolated patch of coastal sage that is mainly planted and not a vital patch of habitat within the larger, high quality habitat of the lagoon. However, gnatcatchers have been observed near the habitat on more than one occasion. Permanent impacts to 0.008 acre of coastal sage scrub will be mitigated at a ratio of 2:1 and will result in revegetation of 0.011 acre of coastal sage scrub habitat on-site and 0.005 acre at Solana Hills Site. Temporary impacts within the PIA will be located along the sides of the existing visitor center are a result of construction activities. All temporary impacts (0.149 acre) to coastal sage scrub habitat will be revegetated and restored following the end of construction. These mitigation measures will be implemented before and after construction as coordinated with the USFWS and CDFG through the Habitat Loss Permit process.

Wetland habitat is located approximately 100 feet west and south of the project, however, all construction activity and ground disturbance will remain within the PIA and there will be no impacts to wetland or other waters of the U.S. No new construction will extend into the 100 foot wetland buffer zone.

Therefore with the incorporation of the proposed mitigation, minimization, and conservation measures, the impacts identified in the MND would be fully mitigated to below a level of significance.

- c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: Based on a Biological Technical Report (AMEC, 2005), it has been determined that wetlands, defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act are located approximately 100 feet east of the existing visitor center. This includes coastal/valley freshwater marsh, southern coastal saltmarsh, saltpan/mudflats, and open water habitat. However, the project will remain within the footprint of the existing structures and would not result in direct or indirect impacts to wetland habitat. The project will not result in any discharge into, direct removal, filling, or hydrologically interrupting, any federally protected wetlands supported near the project site. The project proposes complete avoidance of the nearby wetlands. Also, the development has 20-foot setbacks to protect the wetland habitat from potential indirect impacts including erosion. Therefore, no significant impacts will occur to wetlands or waters of the U.S. that are regulated under the Army Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

- d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project would result in direct impacts to 0.008 acre of gnatcatcher-occupied coastal sage scrub, which will be mitigated by revegetating habitat at a 2:1 ratio and will result in revegetation of 0.011 acre of coastal sage scrub habitat on-site and 0.005 acre at Solana Hills Site. The fragmented patch of habitat within the PIA is located among larger, more continuous gnatcatcher habitat that supports local and migratory populations of the gnatcatcher and other species. The PIA is small in size and is located within the larger San Elijo Lagoon Reserve, which encompasses approximately 900 acres of diverse natural habitat, including coastal sage scrub. The project would replace an existing visitor center with a new, LEED certified structure and the new structure would not

significantly interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors. Due to the large surrounding habitat provided by the lagoon, the loss of 0.008 acre is not considered a significant interference of wildlife (i.e., gnatcatcher) movement. The project site does not include the use of native wildlife nursery sites. Construction activities associated with the nature center are temporary in nature, and because the new structure would be placed in the same location as the existing structure, this project will not result in significant adverse effects to wildlife dispersal corridors.

- e) Conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: Under the draft North County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), the site is identified as 'Pre-negotiated Hardlined Take Authorization'. This category includes properties that have approved development agreements showing designated development and biological open space areas. For these properties, the area that has been developed or is approved for development is outside the preserve, while the open space area is in the preserve and is 100 percent protected. These areas will be conserved, managed, and monitored pursuant to guidelines in the MSCP. The MSCP identifies land uses and activities that are considered conditionally compatible with the biological objectives of the plan and are allowed within the preserve. One such land use is "environmental interpretation/educational/research activities and nature centers." According to the plan, expansion of existing permitted uses within the preserve must comply with applicable land use regulations and shall provide measures to minimize impacts on the preserve, including lighting, noise, dust, or controlled access (AMEC, 2005).

As such, the loss of Diegan coastal sage scrub has been pre-authorized and would not contribute to a cumulative loss of sensitive habitat. Although the Draft MSCP for North County has not yet been approved, the proposed project is consistent with the MSCP designation for the site. Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan (MHCP) coastal California gnatcatcher Critical Habitat Unit 3 is located approximately 200 feet west of the project site (AMEC, 2005). The project will remain within the existing developed area and would have no significant adverse effect to the adjacent MHCP designated habitat or the Draft MSCP for North County.

The project will not conflict with the draft North County MSCP for the project site. The project will result in mitigation at a 2:1 ratio, resulting in revegetation of CSS on-site and within the Solana Hills Site. Additionally, Natural Communities Conservation Plan NCCP compatibility will be demonstrated by making NCCP/4(d) findings as part of the Habitat Loss Permit (HLP) process. An HLP will be obtained in the event construction of the project begins before the MSCP for North County is approved/adopted.

As such, the project will not conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state

habitat conservation plan or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources applicable to the site.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in 15064.5?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: Based on an analysis of records and a survey of the property by a County of San Diego certified archaeologist, it has been determined that there are no impacts to historical resources because they do not occur within the project site

- b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to 15064.5?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated: The project site was surveyed by a County certified archaeologist on March 27, 2006. It was determined that there is one archaeological resource present located adjacent to the proposed project site. The Cultural Resources Study for the San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center Improvement Project (ASM Affiliates, 2006), evaluated the significance of the site based on archival research and a field survey. It was determined that the archaeological resource is significant pursuant to the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15064.5.

The archeological resource present onsite (SDI-6850) is a large coastal shell midden. The midden site is located in the earthen berm between Manchester Avenue north of the visitor center and extends across the berm for approximately 61 x 12 meters. Views north of the visitor center towards the berm reveal the shell in the cut bank. The predominant shell species on the exposed surface of the berm are *Argopecten aequisulcatus*, *Chione* spp., and *Ostrea lurida* within a light tan matrix. Previous ground-disturbing activities have impacted the original midden site, including construction of Manchester Avenue, creation of a dredged pond, and the construction of the Cardiff Pump Station. As a result of these activities, a portion of the archaeological site has previously been destroyed or relocated. The scatter of shell around the existing graded pad may be displaced from its original location leaving the original configuration of the midden site unclear. It is likely that the most intact portion of the site is located within the earthen berm between Manchester Avenue and the existing visitor center.

Grading and earthwork associated with the proposed project may have the potential to impact the midden site. The following recommendations to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the shell midden site have been suggested by a County certified archaeologist. Implementing these recommendations will reduce impacts to a level below significance.

- Under the supervision of the County Historian (Department of Parks and Recreation) and the Department of Public Works, a qualified archaeologist will identify the slope north of the visitor center as a cultural resources sensitive area using stakes and flagging tape prior to removal of the existing trailer and storage shed and demolition of the visitor center. No construction will be permitted within the cultural resources sensitive area.
- The area identified as the cultural resources sensitive area shall be fenced off from the project area. The fence installation shall be monitored. The fence will be installed without postholes or excavation of any kind.
- A qualified archaeologist and Native American consultant/Kumeyaay-appointed consultant will monitor ground disturbing grading activity and development activity during construction of the nature center. The archaeologist and Native American consultant shall meet with the County Historian and the Department of Parks and Recreation project manager to develop a construction schedule and monitoring protocols. The monitors will have the authority to halt, delay, or relocate grading should an undisturbed, buried cultural deposit or culturally sensitive material be encountered. If the deposit cannot be avoided, a treatment plan for determination of significance and mitigation, if necessary, shall be prepared and a monitoring report will be prepared. Only diagnostic materials shall be collected. Prior to any collection of archaeological material, arrangements shall be made for curation at the San Diego Archaeological Center. A monitoring report shall be prepared to provide the results of the monitoring program.
- A trail is proposed for construction behind the nature center to provide access to an elevator to the second story. The trail will be approximately 30 feet long and 6 feet wide, and must be handicap accessible. The trail will be constructed outside of the cultural resources sensitive area (the berm); however, because of its proximity to the cultural resources sensitive area, special measures are recommended to avoid impacts to the site.
 - Construct the trail using a maximum excavation of four feet to establish a foundation for the trail, or to the minimum grading necessary to obtain a slope of less than 5 percent on the trail.
 - Place handicap accessible surfacing on the trail (rubberized surfacing, stabilized decomposed granite, etc.).
 - All grading for the trail will be monitored.

County staff have determined that adherence to these mitigation measures would reduce any impact to cultural resources to a level below significance. As such, the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to 15064.5.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: A review of the paleontological maps provided by the San Diego County Museum of Natural History, combined with available information on the geologic formations of San Diego County indicates that the project is located on igneous rock and has no

potential for producing fossil remains. No known unique geologic features have been identified on the site or in the immediate vicinity. Therefore, the project will not directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic feature.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: An analysis of records and a survey of the property by a County certified archaeologist indicate that the project site is located within an area that has the potential to support human remains. Nearly all earthwork associated with construction of the nature center will occur within an existing developed footprint. The northern part of the nature center near the midden site will require construction of an ADA access ramp that will result in minor grading and earthwork. A County certified archeologist will be present during all earthwork activities to assess the potential for human remains. While the potential does exist for human remains, grading will occur in fill materials and not exceed four feet in depth, a level above which human remains are not typically discovered.

Though minimal grading and construction monitoring will avoid the potential for human remains, the discovery of human remains is always a possibility and these finds are covered by State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. This code section states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the site within 24 hours of notification, and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials. A Construction Monitoring and Mitigation Plan has been prepared according to County standards that outlines measures to be taken if, perchance, human remains are discovered. Therefore, minimal ground disturbance and construction monitoring will not disturb any human remains, formal cemetery, or any archaeological resources that might contain interred human remains.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

- i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site and surrounding region are located within a seismically active area that has been subject to major earthquakes in the past. The Elsinore and San Jacinto fault zones are the two major active faults located within a 50-mile radius of the project area. There are no known active faults located at the project site, and the site is not located in a fault rupture hazard zone identified by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, Special Publication 42, Revised 1997. Also, a Geotechnical Report was prepared for the project in November 2002 and has concluded that no other substantial evidence of recent (Holocene) fault activity is present within the project site. Therefore, there will be no impact from the exposure of people or structures to adverse effects from a known hazard zone as a result of this project.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The Uniform Building Code (UBC) and the California Building Code (CBC) classifies all San Diego County with the highest seismic zone criteria, Zone 4. However, the project is not located within three miles of the centerline of a known active-fault zone as defined within the Uniform Building Code's Maps of Known Active Fault Near-Source Zones in California. In addition, the project will have to conform to the Seismic Requirements -- Chapter 16 Section 162- *Earthquake Design* as outlined within the California Building Code. Section 162 requires a soils compaction report with proposed foundation recommendations to be approved by a County Structural Engineer before the issuance of a building or grading permit. Therefore, there will be no impact from the exposure of people or structures to potential adverse effects from strong seismic ground shaking as a result of this project.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The project site is located just outside of a floodplain and is identified as underlain by clayey alluvium soils below the water table. A Geotechnical Report prepared by Ninyo & Moore, on file with the Department of Planning and Land Use as Environmental Review Number 104785001, has determined that the project on-site conditions have a low susceptibility to settlement and liquefaction. While the potential for liquefaction is low, localized pockets of potentially liquefiable sand may exist in the lagoon area. However, these localized spots are not anticipated to be located under the existing structure where the new building will be constructed, and are generally located outside the most heavily trafficked area of the project. The project would conform to the UBC and Geotechnical Report, which outlines recommendations for foundation and stability. Additionally, the project does not involve uses that would expose people to unstable conditions for extended periods of time, such as residential uses. Therefore, there will be a

less than significant impact for the exposure of people to adverse effects from a known area susceptible to liquefaction.

iv. Landslides?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The site is not located within a landslide susceptibility zone. Also, a Geotechnical Report has determined that the geologic environment of the project area is not located within an area of potential or pre-existing conditions that could become unstable in the event of seismic activity.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: According to the Soil Survey of San Diego County, the site contains three different soil types. This includes Corralitos loamy sand (5 to 9 percent slopes) (CsC) in the northeast of the site, terrace escarpments (TeF) in the southwest of the site, and uncharacterized fill in the southern portion of the site, due to the previous location of a dredged pond. CsC has a soil erodibility rating of "slight" to "moderate" and TeF has a soil erodibility rating of "severe", as indicated by the Soil Survey for the San Diego Area, prepared by the US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation and Forest Service dated December 1973. The Geotechnical Report prepared for the site indicated that the site consists mainly of fill and alluvium. The project will not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil for the following reasons:

- The project will not result in unprotected erodible soils; will not alter existing drainage patterns; and will not develop steep slopes.
- The project has prepared a Water Quality Report dated May 2006, prepared by Burns & McDonnell. The plan includes the following Best Management Practices to ensure sediment does not erode from the project site: Silt fencing, street sweeping and vacuuming, stockpile management, gravel bag berm, paving and grinding operations, stabilized construction entrance/exit, fiber rolls, spill prevention and control, solid waste management, dewatering operations, concrete waste management, material delivery and storage, and water conservation practices. Additionally, the project will include 'green roofs', which would reduce the amount of stormwater runoff.
- The project involves grading, however, the project is required to comply with the San Diego County Code of Regulations, Title 8, Zoning and Land Use Regulations, Division 7, Sections 87.414 (DRAINAGE - EROSION PREVENTION) and 87.417 (PLANTING). Compliance with these regulations minimizes the potential for water and wind erosion.

Due to these factors, it has been found that the project will not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil on a project level.

In addition, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact because all the of past, present and future projects included on the list of projects that involve grading or land disturbance are required to follow the requirements of the San Diego County Code of Regulations, Title 8, Zoning and Land Use Regulations, Division 7, Sections 87.414 (DRAINAGE - EROSION PREVENTION) and 87.417 (PLANTING); Order 2001-01 (NPDES No. CAS 0108758), adopted by the San Diego Region RWQCB on February 21, 2001; County Watershed Protection, Storm Water Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance (WPO) (Ord. No. 9424); and County Storm water Standards Manual adopted on February 20, 2002, and amended January 10, 2003 (Ordinance No. 9426). Refer to XVII. Mandatory Findings of Significance for a comprehensive list of the projects considered.

- c) Will the project produce unstable geological conditions that will result in adverse impacts resulting from landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The project will result in site disturbance and grading mainly within the footprint of the existing structures. There will be some grading and vegetation removal located at the future outdoor gathering area and to construct the path adjacent and north of the new nature center. While the potential for liquefaction at the site is low, localized pockets of potentially liquefiable sand may exist in the lagoon area. A Geotechnical Report has been prepared for the project that presents potential issues regarding site geological characteristics and potential recommendations. The report concludes that the formational materials encountered in the exploratory borings are considered suitable for structural support, however, the fill and alluvial materials encountered are considered unsuitable for structural support in its present condition. The Geotechnical Report concludes that there is not potential for lateral spreading or collapse on the site. For further information refer to VI Geology and Soils, Question a., i-iv listed above.

- d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: According to a geotechnical report prepared for the project, the project contains moderately expansive soils as defined by Table 18-1-B of the UBC (1994). The soils on-site are Corralitos loamy sand (5 to 9 percent slopes) in the north of the site adjacent to Manchester Avenue, terrace escarpments in the southwest and artificial fill. The moderately expansive soils derived from on-site sources are generally considered suitable for reuse as compacted fill. Replaced fill soil will consist of granular material with an Expansion Index of 75 or less, as evaluated by UBC Standard 18-2. Therefore, the project

will not create a substantial risk to life or property. This was confirmed by staff review of the Soil Survey for the San Diego Area, prepared by the US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation and Forest Service dated December 1973.

- e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project will continue to rely on public water and sewer for the disposal of wastewater, as it has in the past. No septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed.

VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- Would the project:

- a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or wastes?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The existing buildings onsite do not house hazardous substances, nor are they in use in the immediate vicinity. The project will include demolition of existing buildings onsite. Because the structures were constructed in the late 1980s, it is unlikely that the structures contain asbestos materials or lead base paint. While no hazardous building materials are anticipated, the project will comply with the County of San Diego asbestos ordinance which is administered by the Department of Environmental Health. This could include inspection of building materials prior to removal, and would also identify demolition and removal practices if such building materials were discovered onsite. As such, the project will not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment because it does not propose the storage, use, transport, emission, or disposal of hazardous substances, nor are hazardous substances proposed or currently in use in the immediate vicinity.

- b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project will not contain, handle, or store any potential sources of chemicals or compounds that would present a significant risk of accidental explosion or release of hazardous substances. To assure that no asbestos or lead containing materials are present in the demolished buildings, the project will comply with the County of San Diego asbestos ordinance which is administered by the Department of Environmental Health.

- c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

<input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact
<input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school, nor will it emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. Therefore, the project will not have any effects related to hazardous materials on an existing or proposed school.

- d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

<input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact
<input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is not located on a site listed in the State of California Hazardous Waste and Substances sites list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

- e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

<input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact
<input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not located within a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for airports; or within two miles of a public airport. Also, the project does not propose construction of any structure equal to or greater than 150 feet in height, constituting a safety hazard to aircraft and/or operations from an airport or heliport. Therefore, the project will not constitute a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

- f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not within one mile of a private airstrip. As a result, the project will not constitute a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

- g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

The following sections summarize the project's consistency with applicable emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans.

i. OPERATIONAL AREA EMERGENCY PLAN:

No Impact: The Operational Area Emergency Plan is a framework document that provides direction to local jurisdictions to develop specific operational operation area of San Diego County. It provides guidance for emergency planning and requires subsequent plans to be established by each jurisdiction that has responsibilities in a disaster situation. The project will not interfere with this plan because it will not prohibit subsequent plans from being established.

ii. SAN DIEGO COUNTY NUCLEAR POWER STATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

No Impact: The project will not interfere with the San Diego County Nuclear Power Station Emergency Response Plan due to project location, plant location, and plan requirements. The proposed project is not within 10 miles of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station which includes an emergency plant and as such, the proposed project is not expected to interfere with any response or evacuation.

iii. OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY ELEMENT

No Impact: The proposed project is on land that is within the coastal zone. However, no active oil drilling is located within the vicinity of the project, nor are any off-shore drilling rigs located in an area that may be affected by an oil spill.

iv. EMERGENCY WATER CONTINGENCIES ANNEX AND ENERGY SHORTAGE RESPONSE PLAN

No Impact: The project will not interfere with the Emergency Water Contingencies Annex and Energy Shortage Response Plan because the project does not propose altering major water or energy supply infrastructure, such as the California Aqueduct.

v. DAM EVACUATION PLAN

No Impact: The project lies outside of any mapped dam inundation area for major dams/reservoirs within San Diego County, as identified on inundation maps prepared by the dam owners so it will not interfere with the County of San Diego Operational Site Specific Dam Failure Evacuation Data Plans.

- h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is adjacent to wildlands that have the potential to support wildland fires. However, the project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires because the project will comply with the regulations relating to emergency access, water supply, and defensible space specified in the Uniform Fire Code, Article 9 and Appendix II-A, Section 16, as adopted and amended by the local fire protection district. The existing visitor center is serviced by the City of Encinitas Fire Protection District, which would continue to provide service to the project site. Based on the review of the project by County staff, compliance with the Uniform Fire Code, Article 9 and Appendix II-A, Section 16, and compliance with the Encinitas Fire Protection District's conditions, the project will not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving hazardous wildland fires. Moreover, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact, because all past, present and future projects are required to comply with the Uniform Fire Code.

- i) Expose people to significant risk of injury or death involving vectors, including mosquitoes, rats or flies?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The presence of the San Elijo Lagoon surrounding the project site does involve uses that could potentially allow water to stand for a period of 72 hours (3 days) or more. Therefore, the project may expose people to significant risk of injury or death involving vectors. However, there is an existing Vector Management Plan that has been approved by the County Department of Environmental Health, Vector Surveillance Program that ensures people will not be exposed to vectors (County of San Diego, 2005). The plan includes vector management practices such as inspections and identification of vector breeding sources at rivers, streams, marshlands, lagoons, ponds, and other sources of standing water. Therefore, the project will not expose people to significant risk of injury or death involving vectors or create cumulatively considerable impact because all uses on-site or in the surrounding area are addressed through an existing Vector Management Plan.

VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:

a) Violate any waste discharge requirements?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The project proposes to demolish an existing one-story structure and construct a two-story nature center in the same general footprint and would require grading on approximately 0.339 acre of land. A Water Quality Report has been prepared in accordance with the Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance and the Stormwater Standards Manual, which concluded that pollutant concentrations and erosion are not anticipated to increase significantly as a result of the project. As identified in the Water Quality Report, the project will be required to implement the following site design measures and source control BMP's to reduce potential pollutants to the maximum extent practicable from entering storm water runoff:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| - silt fencing | - gravel bag berm |
| - street sweeping/vacuuming | - paving and grinding operations |
| - stockpile management | - stabilized construction |
| - water conservation practices | entrance/exit |
| - fiber rolls | - spill prevention and control |
| - solid waste management | - dewatering operations |
| - concrete waste management | - material delivery and storage |

In addition, the project will include LEED certified 'green roofs', which would reduce the amount of storm water runoff. These measures will enable the project to meet waste discharge requirements as required by the Land-Use Planning for New Development and Redevelopment Component of the San Diego Municipal Permit (SDRWQCB Order No. 2001-01), as implemented by the San Diego County Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Program (JURMP) and Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP).

Finally, the project's conformance to the waste discharge requirements listed above ensures the project will not create cumulatively considerable water quality impacts related to waste discharge because, through the permit, the project will conform to Countywide watershed standards in the JURMP and SUSMP, derived from State regulation to address human health and water quality concerns. Therefore, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact to water quality from waste discharges.

b) Is the project tributary to an already impaired water body, as listed on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list? If so, could the project result in an increase in any pollutant for which the water body is already impaired?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The project lies in the San Elijo hydrologic subarea (904.61), within the Carlsbad hydrologic unit. Portions of this watershed are impaired for Coliform bacteria, nutrients, and sediment. The project does not propose any known sources of pollutants, or land use activities which will contaminate surface water sources so as to decrease the quality of surface water to below standards as established by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board's (SDRWQCB) Basin Plan, Surface Water Quality Objectives. In addition, BMPs (as outlined in the Water Quality Report) will be implemented during construction to ensure that any potential pollutants will be reduced in any runoff to receiving waters (Burns & McDonnell, 2006).

The proposed BMP's that will be in place during construction are consistent with regional surface water and storm water planning and permitting process that has been established to improve the overall water quality in County watersheds. As a result the project will not contribute to a cumulative impact to an already impaired water body, as listed on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d).

- c) Could the proposed project cause or contribute to an exceedance of applicable surface or groundwater receiving water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The Regional Water Quality Control Board has designated water quality objectives for waters of the San Diego Region as outlined in Chapter 3 of the Water Quality Control Plan (Plan). The water quality objectives are necessary to protect the existing and potential beneficial uses of each hydrologic unit as described in Chapter 2 of the Plan.

The project lies in the San Elijo hydrologic subarea, within the Carlsbad hydrologic unit that has the following existing and potential beneficial uses for coastal waters: contact and non-contact water recreation; preservation of biological habitats of special significance; wildlife habitat; estuarine habitat; marine habitat; rare, threatened, or endangered species habitat; migration of aquatic organisms; and spawning, reproduction, and/or early development. The existing beneficial uses for groundwater include municipal and domestic supply, agricultural supply, and industrial service supply. Beneficial uses for groundwater do not apply to westerly portion of the eastern boundary of the right-of-way of I-5 and this area is also excepted from the sources of drinking water policy.

The proposed project is for replacement of an existing visitor center at the San Elijo Lagoon. BMPs will be implemented during construction to ensure that receiving waters are not polluted and that beneficial uses are not degraded. Therefore, the project will not cause or contribute to an exceedance (both project or cumulatively) of applicable surface or groundwater receiving water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses.

- d) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project will continue to obtain its water supply from the San Dieguito Water District. The project will not use any groundwater for any purpose, including irrigation, domestic or commercial demands. In addition, the project does not involve operations that would interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. Therefore, no impact to groundwater resources is anticipated.

- e) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The project proposes to replace the existing visitor center with a new LEED certified nature center. The new nature center would remain within the existing footprint, however, a planted coastal sage area of 0.008 acre will be converted to impervious surface. As part of the LEED certification, the nature center will also have a green roof (planted with native vegetation), which would reduce the amount of surface runoff that enters the drainage patterns of the site. Storm water currently sheet flows from the visitor center structures to the surrounding vegetation and earthen terrain. The parking lot is currently graded to drain to the south and southeast to two catch basins that discharge directly to the San Elijo Lagoon. Parking lot improvements will not include modifications to these storm drains and site drainage patterns, although slightly modified, will not be significantly altered.

As outlined in the Water Quality Report (Burns & McDonnell, 2006) and Section VIII (a) above, the project will implement site design measures, source control, and/or treatment control BMPs to reduce potential pollutants. The Department of Parks and Recreation will ensure that BMPs are implemented as proposed. Due to these factors, it has been found that the project will not result in significantly increased erosion or sedimentation potential and will not alter any drainage patterns of the site or area on- or off-site. In addition, because erosion and sedimentation will be controlled within the boundaries of the project, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact. For further information on soil erosion refer to VI., Geology and Soils, Question b.

- f) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The project does not involve construction of new or expanded development that could alter the drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site. The project site includes replacing an existing visitor center with a new, modern, LEED certified nature center. The proposed project will result in an additional 0.008 acre of impervious surfaces through vegetation removal. However, overall surface water runoff will be decreased through installment of a green roof, resulting in beneficial impacts to surface drainage patterns. It is not anticipated that the minor change in nature center building components will significantly increase erosion in the surrounding lagoon. The two onsite storm drains will not be relocated or altered as part of the project. Due to these factors, it has been found that the project will not result in significantly increased erosion or sedimentation potential and will not alter any drainage patterns of the site or area on- or off-site.

- g) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project includes replacing an existing visitor center with a modern nature center. The project will result in the conversion of 0.008 acre (approximately 1 percent of the PIA) of previously pervious land to impervious surfaces. The project also includes a green roof, which would cover the majority of the building's roof. Other uses at the project site would remain essentially the same, and the project would not create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems.

- h) Provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will replace an existing visitor center with a more modern, LEED certified building designed to reduce storm water runoff. The parking lot and storm drains would remain in their current configuration. The project does not propose any known additional sources of polluted runoff, nor would it require substantial grading that would require a grading permit. In addition, the project does not propose new storm water drainage facilities, nor does the project site contain natural drainage features that would transport runoff off-site.

- i) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map, including County Floodplain Maps?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is for the replacement of a visitor center in the same location and does not include the placement or relocation of housing. Therefore the project would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map, including County Floodplain Maps.

- j) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center at the same location. The project site is located approximately 40 feet north of a flood hazard area. The project does not propose to place structures, access roads, or other improvements which will impede or redirect flood flows within the 100-year flood hazard area.

- k) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project lies outside any mapped dam inundation area for major dams/reservoirs within San Diego County. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam.

- l) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

i. SEICHE

No Impact: The project site is located in the San Elijo Lagoon, which is open to tidal flows from the Pacific Ocean. Seiche's typically occur within closed bodies of water such as lakes or reservoirs. As such, the proposed project does not have a significant potential to be inundated by a seiche.

ii. TSUNAMI

Less than Significant: The project site is located within a mile of the Pacific coast and could potentially be subject to tsunami hazards; however, the coastal geology near the project site and historical records indicate that it is unlikely for a tsunami of significant magnitude to result in significant impacts to the area. The proposed project would not increase the likelihood of such an event occurring. Therefore, the project will not potentially expose people or structures to inundation due to tsunami.

iii. MUDFLOW

No Impact: Mudflow is type of landslide. The site is not located within a landslide susceptibility zone. Also, a staff geologist has determined that the geologic environment of the project area is not located within an area of potential or pre-existing conditions that could become unstable in the event of seismic activity. In addition, the project does propose land disturbance that will expose soils and the project is not located downstream from exposed soils within a landslide susceptibility zone. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the project will expose people or property to inundation due to a mudflow.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING -- Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project involves the replacement of an existing visitor center with a new nature center in the same location. The project does not propose the introduction of new infrastructure such as major roadways, water supply systems, or utilities to the area. Therefore, the proposed project will not significantly disrupt or divide the established community.

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The proposed project is located on a portion of a 9.01-acre County-owned and managed parcel of land within the San Elijo Reserve County Park in Encinitas. The project area is zoned as ER/OS/P under the Chapter 30.32 of the Encinitas Zoning Regulations, and is designated as ER/OS/P in the Land Use element of the Encinitas General Plan. Use of the park for passive recreation and as an interpretive center/nature center is consistent with the intent of the ER/OS/P Zone and General Plan designation.

The project is entirely within the area of retained jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission and therefore requires a Coastal Development Permit. Approval of a Coastal Development Permit would require a determination that the project is consistent with the California Coastal Act (CCA). The proposed project would be consistent with the following policies of the CCA:

- The project would maintain access to the lagoon from the nearest public street in a manner that is consistent with the protection of fragile coastal resources. The facility would also provide a lower cost recreational opportunity within the Coastal Zone.
- The proposed project would continue to preserve the marine environment and comply with the goal of the CCA to sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and maintain healthy populations of all marine organisms (California Public Resources Code 30230).
- The project would continue to protect environmentally sensitive habitat areas against any disruption of habitat values per PRC Section 30240, and would be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas.
- PRC Section 30251 requires that 'the scenic and visual quality of coastal areas be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Also under this requirement, the project would provide safe public access, avoiding risk associated with development in a floodplain, and avoiding substantial alteration of natural landforms.

The project site is located within the Draft Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) for North County San Diego. This plan is still in the review phases and is not yet considered final, however, a brief discussion of the requirements under the plan is provided. Under the draft North County MSCP, the site is identified as 'Pre-negotiated Hardlined Take Authorization'. This category includes properties that have approved development agreements showing designated development and biological open space areas. For these properties, the area that has been developed or is approved for development is outside the preserve, while the open space area is in the preserve and is 100 percent protected. These areas will be conserved, managed, and monitored pursuant to guidelines in the MSCP. The MSCP identifies land uses and activities that are considered conditionally compatible with the biological objectives of the plan and are allowed within the preserve. One such land use is "environmental interpretation/educational/research activities and nature centers." According to the plan, expansion of existing permitted uses within the preserve must comply with applicable land use regulations and shall provide measures to minimize impacts on the preserve, including lighting, noise, dust, or controlled access (AMEC, 2005).

As such, the loss of Diegan coastal sage scrub has been pre-authorized and would not contribute to a cumulative loss of sensitive habitat. Although the Draft MSCP for North County has not yet been approved, the proposed project is consistent with the MSCP designation for the site. Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan (MHCP) coastal California gnatcatcher Critical Habitat Unit 3 is located approximately 200 feet west of the project site (AMEC, 2005). The project will remain within the existing developed area and would have

no significant adverse effect to the adjacent MHCP designated habitat or the Draft MSCP for North County.

The project will not conflict with the draft North County MSCP for the project site. The project will result in mitigation at a 2:1 ratio, resulting in revegetation of CSS on-site and within the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve on a County-owned parcel. Additionally, NCCP compatibility will be demonstrated by making NCCP/4(d) findings as part of the Habitat Loss Permit (HLP) process. An HLP will be obtained in the event construction of the project begins before the MSCP for North County is approved/adopted.

As such, the project will not conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources applicable to the site. Therefore, the proposed project will not conflict with land use policies, plans, or regulations of an agency with jurisdiction over the project.

X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

- a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site has been classified by the California Department of Conservation – Division of Mines and Geology (Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego Production-Consumption Region, 1997) as an area of undetermined mineral resources (MRZ-3). A Geotechnical Report has reviewed the geologic environment of the project site and has determined that it is not located within an alluvial river valley or underlain by coastal marine/non-marine granular deposits. Therefore, no potentially significant loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value to the region and the residents of the state will occur as a result of this project. Moreover, if the resources are not considered significant mineral deposits, loss of these resources cannot contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact.

- b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project site is zoned ER/OS/P, which is not considered to be an Extractive Use Zone (S-82) nor does it have an Impact Sensitive Land Use Designation (24) with an Extractive Land Use Overlay (25) (County Land Use Element, 2000). Therefore, the project will not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site.

XI. NOISE -- Would the project result in:

- a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project includes replacing an existing visitor center in the same location with the same uses. Uses on the project site currently do not expose people to potentially significant noise levels. The proposed project is zoned ER/OS/P and is considered an NSA that has a one-hour average sound limit of CNEL 60 dBA. Based on a Noise Analysis, (PBS&J, 2006) implementation of the proposed project will not expose existing or planned noise sensitive areas to road, airport, heliport, railroad, industrial or other noise in excess of the CNEL 60 dBA. Areas adjacent to the proposed project consist mainly of the open space, similarly zoned as ER/OS/P, with some single-family residential north of Manchester Avenue, which has one-hour average sound limit of CNEL 60 dBA. The Noise Analysis concludes that the project's noise levels at the adjoining properties will be CNEL 51 dBA at nearby residences, CNEL 51 dBA at outdoor gathering areas, and CNEL 27 dBA at classroom facilities, all of which will not exceed County Noise Standards.

Based on the Noise Analysis, the project will not generate construction noise that would exceed the standards of the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36-410) or the City of Encinitas Noise Ordinance (Chapter 9.32.410). Construction operations will occur only during permitted hours of operation pursuant to Section 36-410. To avoid periods of heightened noise sensitivity, construction activities will be limited between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. With these time limits, construction of the proposed project will not expose people to potentially significant noise levels that exceed the allowable limits of the County of San Diego General Plan, County of San Diego Noise Ordinance, and other applicable standards. Therefore, the project will not expose people to potentially significant noise levels that exceed the allowable limits of the County of San Diego General Plan, Noise Element.

Finally, the project's conformance to the County of San Diego General Plan (Noise Element, Policy 4b and County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36-404 and 36.410) ensures the project will not create cumulatively considerable noise impacts, because the project will not exceed the local noise standards for NSAs; and the project will not exceed the applicable noise level limits at the property line or construction noise limits derived from State regulation to address human health and quality of life concerns. Therefore, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable exposure of persons or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, and applicable standards of other agencies.

- b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location and does not propose any land uses that can be impacted by or result in groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

- c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacing the existing visitor center with a more modern nature center in the same location. Uses at the site will generally remain the same as in current conditions. Uses at the site, both presently and with implementation of the proposed project, include passive recreation such as hiking, walking, or biking, educational programs, and vehicular traffic. Recreational activities are not considered significant noise generators. As such, the project will not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity.

- d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant Impact: The proposed project is for the replacement of the existing visitor center in the same location. The project does not involve any uses that may create substantial temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity. The temporary increase over existing ambient noise levels for general construction noise is not expected to exceed the construction noise limits of the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance (Section 36-410) or the City of Encinitas Noise Ordinance (Chapter 9.32.410), which are derived from State regulations to address human health and quality of life concerns.

Additionally, due to the project location within sensitive habitat for the federally listed coastal California gnatcatcher, the adopted noise standard for biotic communities is CNEL 60 dBA. The noise protection standard for construction activity impacts to noise-sensitive biotic habitats is 15 dB more stringent than it is for human residential use. As such, hourly average noise levels could exceed 60 dBA Leq out to around 500 feet from the construction area. In areas of irregular terrain, the zone of possible avian impact may be less than the theoretical maximum of 500 feet. If construction continues during the Gnatcatcher and light-footed clapper rail breeding seasons, sound barriers at sensitive habitat locations will be implemented during construction as coordinated with the USFWS and CDFG and are reasonable and prudent. Construction operations will occur only during permitted hours of operation pursuant to Section 36-410. Also, it is not anticipated that the project will operate

construction equipment in excess of 75 dB for more than an 8 hours during a 24-hour period. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in existing ambient noise levels in the project vicinity.

- e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not located within a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for airports or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. Therefore, the project will not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels.

- f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is not located within a one-mile vicinity of a private airstrip; therefore, the project will not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels.

XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- Would the project:

- a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will not induce substantial population growth in an area because the project does not propose any physical or regulatory change that would remove a restriction to or encourage population growth in an area including, but limited to the following: new commercial or industrial facilities; large-scale residential development; accelerated conversion of homes to commercial or multi-family use; or regulatory changes including General Plan amendments, specific plan amendments, zone reclassifications, sewer or water annexations; or LAFCO annexation actions. Though the development of the nature center is an expansion of a local public facility, it would not increase beyond the limits

of the existing development footprint, and would not induce substantial population growth within the area.

- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact:

The proposed project is for the replacement of the existing visitor center in the same location and therefore will not displace any existing housing.

- c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will not displace a substantial number of people since the project consists of the replacement of an existing visitor's center in the same location.

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES

- a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

- i. Fire protection?
- ii. Police protection?
- iii. Schools?
- iv. Parks?
- v. Other public facilities?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project includes replacing an existing visitor center with a new, more modern nature center. No additional structures or services will be provided beyond what currently exists. Existing services are available to the project from the following

agencies/districts and will continue following project implementation: City of Encinitas Fire Department, City of Encinitas Police Department, and the Encinitas Union School District. The proposed project is located within the San Elijo Lagoon Reserve, one of the larger parks in the area. Utilization of this park will be improved by implementation of the proposed project. The project does not involve the construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities including but not limited to fire protection facilities, sheriff facilities, schools, or parks in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance service ratios or objectives for any public services. Therefore, the project will not have an adverse physical effect on the environment because the project does not require new or significantly altered services or facilities to be constructed.

XIV. RECREATION

- a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less Than Significant Impact: The San Elijo Lagoon nature center Project proposes to demolish the existing one-story visitor center, trailer, and storage shed, and construct a new, two-story structure. The new building includes a large display/exhibit area, a ranger office, restrooms, a multi-purpose room for meetings and class activities, a wet lab and storage. Outdoor improvements include an assembly area, observation deck, parking lot upgrades, and park entry improvements. Exhibits will educate the public about the lagoon watershed, local wildlife communities and the unique history of this area. The nature center is expected to serve as an educational center for the public and a destination for area school fieldtrips and will be designed to be compatible with the adjacent lagoon environment. The redevelopment of the existing visitor center may have the potential to increase the use of the San Elijo Lagoon Regional Park, notably due to an increased use of the park by school field trips. However, the project does not include the expansion of the parking lot, and would therefore not increase the amount of vehicle trips that visit the park. Additionally, park staff, County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation, and CDFG will continue to maintain trails and public use area such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would not occur. Therefore, the project will not increase the use of the existing County Park and Ecological Reserve such that substantial physical deterioration would occur or be accelerated.

- b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant: The project involves new and expanded recreational facilities at the San Elijo Lagoon County Park and Ecological Reserve. The new and expanded facilities

include a two-story structure with a large display/exhibit area, a ranger office, restrooms, a multi-purpose room for meetings and class activities, a wet lab and storage. Outdoor improvements include an assembly area, an observation deck, parking lot upgrades and park entry improvements. Exhibits will educate the public about the lagoon watershed, local wildlife communities and the unique history of the area. The nature center is expected to serve as an educational center for the public and a destination for area school fieldtrips. It will be designed to be compatible with the adjacent lagoon environment, provide access to the disabled, and obtain a minimum certification of "gold" under the US Green Building Council LEED program.

As outlined in this Environmental Analysis Form Section I-XVII, the new and expanded facilities will not result in adverse physical effect on the environment because all related impacts from the proposed recreation facilities have been mitigated to a level below significance. Refer to Section VI Biological Resources (a. and d.) for more information.

XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- Would the project:

- a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

Less than Significant: The proposed project consists of replacing an existing visitor center with a new nature center in the same location. A Preliminary Traffic Analysis Report (P&D, 2004) indicates that there is currently no specified trip generation for this type of usage in SANDAG's *(Not So) Brief Guide of Vehicular Traffic Generation Rate for the San Diego Region* and determined a rate based on square footage of the visitor center. The estimated trip generation for the proposed project is 60 trips per 1,000 square feet based on existing traffic counts, resulting in an estimated 168 ADTs for the existing visitor center. The increase of 258 average daily trips (ADT) for a total of 426 ADTs will not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions because the portion of Manchester Avenue that serves the site operates at up to 6,500 trips, which is LOS C or better, as determined by the City of Encinitas General Plan, Circulation Element. ADT must exceed 16,000 to receive a LOS of less than C. In addition, 426 trips total is a conservative estimate, as many vehicles use the visitor center entrance for U-turns on Manchester Avenue. In addition, the project will not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact because the visitor center has been operating at the site for approximately eight years and no new uses are being proposed. Therefore, the project will not have a significant project or cumulative level increase in traffic, which is considered substantial in relation to existing traffic load and capacity of the street system.

- b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the County congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. A Preliminary Traffic Impact Report has been prepared for the proposed project (P&D, 2004), which concluded that the proposed project will result in an additional 258 ADT. The addition of 258 ADT will not result in a potential degradation of the level of service of affected roadways in relation to the existing traffic volumes and road capacity. Therefore, the proposed project will not have a significant project or cumulative level impact on the level of service standard established by the County congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.

- c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is located outside of an Airport Master Plan Zone and is not adjacent to any public or private airports; therefore, the project will not result in a change in air traffic patterns.

- d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will not alter traffic patterns, roadway design, or place incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment) on existing roadways.

- e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project will not result in inadequate emergency access. Access to and from the existing visitor center will be maintained during construction of the project. Adequate temporary parking for construction vehicles is available in the existing parking lot.

- f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
|---|---|

- ☐ Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. The existing parking lot has a total of approximately 24 available parking spaces. The proposed project will re-stripe the parking spaces to the County standard of 8'6" which will result in 25 parking spaces. A Preliminary Traffic Analysis Report (P&D, 2004) indicated that there was no specified parking rate for this type of land use. A parking rate was determined based on information gathered during a site-specific parking study. The parking rate for the existing visitor's center was determined to be 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet. As the functionality of the proposed nature center will be similar to the existing visitor's center, this parking rate was used to determine the parking requirements for the proposed nature center. The existing parking configuration will be kept and the uses will remain proportionally the same within the new building; the new nature center (approximately 7,560 square feet total for first and second floor, outdoor assembly area, walkways and observations deck combined) will require 23 of the proposed 25 parking spaces..

- g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?

- ☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The proposed project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. Implementation of the project will not result in any construction or new road design features, and bus access in the parking lot will be maintained; therefore, will not conflict with policies regarding alternative transportation.

XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- Would the project:

- a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

- ☐ Potentially Significant Impact ☐ Less than Significant Impact
☐ Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated ☒ No Impact

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. The project will continue existing discharge of waste from onsite restrooms and facilities to a community sewer system that is permitted to operate by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). No substantial increases in wastewater generation are expected. Therefore, because the project will be discharging wastewater to a RWQCB permitted community sewer system and will be required to satisfy the conditions listed above, the project is consistent with the wastewater treatment requirements of the RWQCB, including the Regional Basin Plan.

- b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. The project does not include new or expanded water or wastewater treatment facilities. In addition, the project does not require the construction or expansion of water or wastewater treatment facilities. The proposed project will replace restroom facilities that have been in operation since the facility opened in 1988. Wastewater treatment facilities are available to the project from the Encinitas Sanitary Division and the San Elijo Reclamation Facility. Therefore, the project will not require any construction of new or expanded facilities resulting in significant environmental effects.

- c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. The project does not include new or expanded storm water drainage facilities. The two storm drains located in the existing parking lot will not be removed or relocated. Moreover, the project does not involve any landform modification or require any source, treatment or structural Best Management Practices for storm water. The addition of a green roof will reduce the overall amount of storm water runoff that enters the storm drain system. Therefore, the project will not require any construction of new or expanded facilities, which could cause significant environmental effects.

- d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. The project requires a continuation of water service from the San Dieguito Water District. Existing water consumption rates for the project will continue, which are considered minimal. Therefore, the project will have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project.

- e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. The project will continue to require wastewater service from the Encinitas Sanitary Division, as it does in the current visitor center. No additional demands to wastewater services are expected, as the new facility will have the same number of public restrooms (2), which contribute minimal amounts of wastewater to the wastewater conveyance system. Therefore, the project will not interfere with any wastewater treatment provider's service capacity.

- f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location. Implementation of the project will generate similar amounts of solid waste as in current conditions. Therefore, there is sufficient existing permitted solid waste capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.

- g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: The project is for the replacement of an existing visitor center in the same location and will not generate solid waste in excess of that currently generated at the site. As such, the replacement of the visitor center will not place any burden on the existing permitted capacity of any landfill or transfer station within San Diego County.

XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

- a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: Per the instructions for evaluating environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory were considered in the response to each question in sections IV and V of this form. In addition to project specific impacts, this evaluation considered the projects potential for significant cumulative effects. Resources that have been evaluated as significant would be potentially impacted by the project, particularly sensitive biological resources. However, avoidance and mitigation has been included that clearly reduces these effects to a level below significance. This mitigation includes habitat based mitigation for impacts to sensitive vegetation communities, and revegetation/creation for impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher habitat. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that, after mitigation, significant effects associated with this project would result. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

- b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: Per the instructions for evaluating environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse cumulative effects were considered in the response to each question in sections I through XVI of this form. In addition to project specific impacts, this evaluation considered the project's potential for incremental effects that are cumulatively considerable. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are cumulative effects associated with this project. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance. No reasonably foreseeable future projects are located within a half-mile of the project site or within the immediate San Elijo Lagoon Area with the exception of potential improvements to the I-5 Manchester interchange and associated widening along I-5. The I-5 Manchester and widening project is currently in the environmental review phases and no timeline is available at this time. However, due to the isolated redevelopment of the proposed project and lack of potentially significant environmental impacts, it is not expected to cumulatively contribute to impacts associated with the improvements to I-5 and the Manchester Avenue Interchange.

- c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Discussion/Explanation:

No Impact: In the evaluation of environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse direct or indirect impacts to human beings were considered in the response to certain questions in sections I. Aesthetics, III. Air Quality, VI. Geology and Soils, VII. Hazards and Hazardous Materials, VIII Hydrology and Water Quality XI. Noise, XII. Population and Housing, and XV. Transportation and Traffic. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are adverse effects on human beings associated with this project. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

XVIII. REFERENCES USED IN THE COMPLETION OF THE INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, Special Publication 42, Revised 1997. | Western San Diego County Production Consumption Region, 1996. |
| AMEC Earth & Environmental, Inc. Biological Technical Report for the Proposed San Eljo Lagoon Visitor Center Improvements Project, May 13, 2006 | California Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, Abandoned Mined Lands Unit, GIS Data. |
| Archaeological, Paleontological, and Historic Sites, (PRC §5097-5097.6), California Public Resources Code. | California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, Special Publication 117, Guidelines for Evaluating and Mitigating Seismic Hazards in California, 1997. |
| Burns & McDonnell. Water Quality Report for the San Eljo Lagoon Visitor Center Project, May 2006. | California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, "A Guide to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program," November 1994. |
| California Aeronautics Act, Public Utilities Code, Section 21001 et seq. California Building Code (CBC), Seismic Requirements, Chapter 16 Section 162. | California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit Statistics, 2000. |
| California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14. Natural Resources Division, CIWMB and Title 27, Environmental Protection Division 2, Solid Waste. | California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub Natural Community Conservation Planning Process Guidelines. CDFG and California Resources Agency, Sacramento, California. 1993. |
| California Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, Fault-Rupture Hazard Zones in California, Special Publication 42, revised 1997. | California Department of Mines and Geology, Special Report 153. |
| California Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, Open File Report 96-04, Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the | California Department of Transportation, |

- Division of Aeronautics, California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook, January 2002.
- California Department of Transportation, Environmental Program Environmental Engineering – Noise, Air Quality, and Hazardous Waste Management Office. “Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol for New Highway Construction and Reconstruction Projects,” October 1998.
- California Department of Water Resources, California Water Plan Update. Sacramento: Dept. of Water Resources State of California. 1998.
- California Department of Water Resources, California’s Groundwater Update 2003 Bulletin 118, April 2003.
- California Department of Water Resources, Water Facts, No. 8, August 2000.
- California Emergency Services Act, Government Code, Title 2, Division 1, Chapter 7 § 8585-8589.
- California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA Guidelines, 2006.
- California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resources Code 21000-21178; California Code of Regulations, Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA, Appendix G, Title 14, Chapter 3, §15000-15387.
- California Farmland Conservancy Program, 1996.
- California Health & Safety Code Chapter 6.95 and §25316 and §25117.
- California Health & Safety Code Section 2000-2067.
- California Integrated Waste Management Act. Public Resources Code, Division 30, Waste Management, Sections 4000-41956.
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